(c) if so, what steps are being taken by Government to streamline the operations in IAC to arrest the decline in foreign tourist arrivals?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM, NABI AZAD): (a) Domestic air services in the country where affected between 10th December, 1992 and 24th January, 1993 because of strike by pilots of Indian Airlines. However, in the period before the strike, Indian Airlines carried more passengers than in the corresponding period last year. Air India has registered a significant increase in its traffic this year.

(b) Tourist arrivals this year from April, 1992 to January, 1993 were 15.25 lakhs f s against 14.66 lakhs in the corresponding period last year.

(c) Indian Airlines is attempting to achieve improvements in productivity, fleet utilisation and industrial relations apart from augmenting its fleet to stream line its operations.

Arbitrary rise in Air Fares

806. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the arbitrary rise in the air fares by nearly 20 per cent hiked by the Air taxi operators taking advantage of the ordinance making them free from any obligation to seek Government's permission;

(b) whether Government are also aware of the violation of safety norms by the Air-taxis with impunity; and

(c) if so, what is the reaction of Government with regard thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Under the existing guidelines for air taxi operations there is no provision for regulation of fare of air taxis.

(b) and (c) The Director Genedal of Civil Aviatiojj has constituted safety audit teams to moiiitor the safety measures observed by the Air Taxi operators. Appropriate action, including penal action is taken, whenever violation of safety norms is observed.

Illegal occupation of areas around airports

807. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated area around the Delhi, Madras, Calcutta and Bombay Airports illegally occupied by slum dwellers;

(b) what according to the estimation, if any, is the annual growth of slums around these airports since 1990; and

(c) what measures have been taken by Government so far to check the growth of slums around the airports and what are the reasons for failure to check their growth endangering safety of the aircraft besides creating unhygenic environment?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Delhi, Madras, Calcutta and Bombay airports have 4.5 acres, nil, 70 acres and 200 acres estimated area respectively under encroachment.

(b) and (c) Consequent upon preventive steps taken by the International Airports Authority of India (IAAI), further growths of slums around the airports has been checked considerably. Only in Bombay there is a marginal growth, whereas at the other airports it is contained at 1990 level. To remove encroachments in vicinity of the Bombay airport, IAAI has paid an initial sum of Rs. 1 crore to Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority as advance towards acquisition of an alternative land for resettlement of squatters. The acquisition proceedings have been held up due to litigation pending in the